

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just take a minute to comment on the legislative history of this resolution.

I first learned of this resolution when I got a call yesterday afternoon from the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) on the golf course. He had his staff busy at work on this, and he wanted to send me a copy of it. Over the evening, we proposed a number of changes to the preamble and to the resolving clause. The gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), to his credit, acknowledged our purpose, which was to confine this resolution to the purpose at hand; that is, commending those who have accomplished what is a daunting feat. It is done every day, but this is a particularly daunting feat. It was a big challenge. So we want to send them a message of commendation. We took out references as to how much we should infer or read from this particular success as to whether or not we would one day have a big missile field over the country so that those who disagree could at least send a word of commendation to the people who have so ably pulled off this test.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) for working with me, but I want to say to my side that this is a much pared-back resolution which we resolved through genuine compromise and I agreed to cosponsor about 1 minute before this debate began.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, that was a good decision, I might say to the gentleman.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Although I am proud of the men and women in our military service and those working for defense contractors who were part of this success, I have to rise in opposition to the resolution for several reasons, first, in terms of process. As the gentleman from South Carolina said, this resolution was never considered by the Committee on Armed Services. It was just brought to the attention of the minority yesterday at 5 o'clock. There was no consultation with the minority until then. I think many Members really do not have a grip on the implications of what it is we are voting on.

Second, precedent. This resolution commends the U.S. military personnel and contractors for the apparently successful national missile defense tests of last Saturday. BMDO says it will conduct 10 more tests in the next year. So do we pass a resolution each time it hits? Should we pass a resolution each time it misses? Because there are some Members who would want to do that, although I am not one of them. Would the majority support their right to offer such a resolution? What kind of precedent are we setting? Will we feel

compelled to vote every time a major weapons system passes a milestone? The F-22, for example. Why not pass a resolution every time a community gets a COPS grant or a housing grant?

My third objection is substance. General Kadish, in the post-test briefing, cautioned that scientists could need months to finish analyzing the test results: "We do not know for certain that every objective was met," he said. "In all probability, some of them were not." I believe it is irresponsible to put the House on record before there has been a full analysis.

Now, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) on the Republican side, who has worked on this issue for years, and I do not see eye to eye on missile defense very much, but together we sent a "Dear Colleague" last week urging Members not to rush to judgment on the test results, positive or negative. We quoted General Kadish: "I do not believe it is helpful to overplay our successes or failures." This resolution runs counter to the spirit of his plea. It is not productive. When the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and I can actually agree on something related to missile defense, we hope a few other Members will listen.

Finally, politics. This resolution will not help solve NMD's technological problems. It will not resolve the ABM Treaty issues. It will not get us to deployment any faster. In my opinion, it serves no purpose other than a political one. The best thing we could do for national missile defense is to reduce the political and ideological motivation and focus on the technology, on the strategic and security issues.

For those reasons, I believe this resolution is ill-advised and should be withdrawn or defeated.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just remind my colleague who just spoke that there are a couple of things that General Kadish did agree on with respect to the test. First, the intercept was made. The interceptor missile, traveling three times the speed of a high-powered rifle bullet, fired from Kwajalein Island did intercept a target missile coming from Vandenburg that also was going three times the speed of a high-powered rifle bullet. Literally, a bullet hit a bullet 138 miles above the earth in the mid-Pacific. That is a fact.

It is true that we monitored this test with a lot of technology, that it is an in-depth test. There is a lot of analysis going on right now, and we are going to see how much information we harvest from this. But I would just tell my friend that I went on record before this test happened saying that I was going to support the continued funding of this program, whether it succeeded or failed, because I believe that this is an important national priority. That is my position.

But, nonetheless, if the gentleman looks at the enormity of American ef-

fort that went into this test, over 35,000 people in the uniformed services and out participating; and if this was a space shot, if this was an exploratory shot into space involving the Challenger or some other aspect of what I would call domestic space exploration, this test would have been given great publicity and great kudos by the media and the United States. I would remind my colleagues, these folks in the uniformed services who work on missile defense work just as hard, put in just as many hours and are just as ingenious as the folks that work on domestic space exploration.

I thought it was absolutely fitting, and I still do, to give them recognition. We have made it very clear. We say that there are going to be lots of failures as well as successes, and we understand that. This is not an attempt to change the ABM Treaty. It is an attempt to acknowledge the American genius that played itself out on Saturday night.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank my colleagues for bringing this very important resolution to the floor.

I think about what I have heard this morning, and it occurs to me that some things that we debate here are not very clear, but others are quite clear. National security is spoken of in the Constitution as one of our primary responsibilities.

I do not really see this as a political or as a public relations issue. It is a philosophical issue. The gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and others and myself believe that strong national security, the protection of our families and our country against foreign aggression with missiles is very important to our future. This was a milestone. A technically very difficult assignment was met. It was successful, and we are moving in the right direction.

In this day and age, when philosophies clash here, I think it is important to set the record straight: This is about sound science; this is not science fiction. We have the ability to produce this protective system. It can be done only by continued effort to protect this country and future generations. And I applaud the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), I applaud our men and women in uniform, and I think it behooves us to continue to support this resolution and to make sure that this country, both space and space inside and outside, are protected. I think this resolution is very timely.

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Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I sent a letter to Secretary Rumsfeld today which cites reports that certain modifications were